



A GENDER EDIT OF THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT DRAFT BUDGET 2017-2018

This document is a 'gender edit' guide to the Scottish Government Draft Budget 2017-2018. It provides excerpts which refer directly to women and gender, but also captures sections on equalities and social justice where women and girls in Scotland would be directly impacted. Where applicable, cross-references have been made to the [Gender Matters Manifesto](#), published in 2016.

Responsibility for gender equality sits with the Ministerial portfolio for Communities, Social Security and Equalities (Draft Budget, Chapter 9, p. 85).

1. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

While the Scottish economy has grown over the past year, the Draft Budget reports that it grew in spite of challenges, including the 'UK Government's approach to public spending' (p. 2) and its austerity programme.

The Draft Budget 'responds directly to these challenges, providing stability and certainty of approach' (p. 2). It 'delivers on the positive steps set out in the 'Programme for Government'¹ to build a nation with a dynamic, sustainable and inclusive economy where every individual has equality of opportunity. It supports our long-term aspiration for inclusive growth – the twin objectives of boosting competitiveness whilst tackling inequality – by targeting resources, reforming public services and the responsible use of tax powers' (p. 2).

¹ The 'Programme for Government' focuses on five themes, including education, the economy, public services, people and communities, and Scotland's place in the world.

2. HEALTH AND SPORT

The Draft Budget commits to further enhancing health and social care services. To improve quality of care and the health of Scotland's population, the Draft Budget proposes to:

- Provide social care workers with the Living Wage (p. 26).
- Progress on the development of a Child and Adolescent Health and Wellbeing Strategy that 'will set the direction for the next 10 years' (p. 28).
- 'Provide an additional £2 million to further expand access to in vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment. Couples with children in the home, but where one partner does not have a biological child, are now able to access fertility treatment and the number of available cycles on the NHS will be increased from two to three during 2017-18' (p. 28).
- Allocate £145 million toward the Baird Family Hospital and the ANCHOR Centre. The Baird Family hospital will provide maternity, gynaecology and breast screening services (p. 29).
- 'Continue to focus on Getting it Right for Every Child² with more effective and widespread early intervention, better cooperation among professionals and a holistic approach to addressing a child's wellbeing' (p. 34).

3. EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education is the Scottish Government's 'defining mission' (p. 46).

With respect to children and families, the Draft Budget sets out the following:

- 'Invest in early learning and childcare as we work towards delivering the increased entitlement of 1,140 hours a year by the end of this Parliament.

² Getting it Right for Every Child is Scotland's national approach for improving outcomes and supporting the well-being of children and young people.

Our vision is...to deliver high quality, flexible early learning and childcare which is affordable and accessible for all' (p. 46).

- Deliver a Baby Box, carrying essential items for a newborn, to the families of all newborn babies in Scotland (p. 52).
- 'Drive progress on implementation of the recommendations made by the Commission on Widening Access³' (p. 55).

Concerning skills and training, the Draft Budget commits:

- To 'continue to tackle structural issues and help challenge inequalities and underrepresentation in the labour market, by supporting people who face barriers to education, training or employment, in partnership with employers, local authorities and the third sector' (p. 58).

4. JUSTICE

To further contribute to the safety and security of communities, the Draft Budget proposes to:

- Create a specific offence for domestic abuse, and support advocacy and other services for victims and victims' families (p. 60).
- Progress with 'the design of a new, smaller, women's national facility as well as local, multi-disciplinary, community custody units' (p. 61).
- 'Publish and implement Scotland's first human trafficking and exploitation strategy, with the explicit vision of eliminating human trafficking and exploitation...' (p. 62).

³ The Commission provided the Scottish Government with a set of recommendations on how to meet its goal of providing all children in Scotland, no matter their socio-economic background, with the opportunity to attend university.

5. ECONOMY, JOBS AND FAIR WORK

The Draft Budget proposes to promote ‘inclusive growth’ and to create ‘opportunity through a fair and inclusive jobs market’ (p. 74). Specifically, the Draft Budget outlines:

- A continued commitment to work with the Fair Work Convention⁴ and to put ‘put fairness at the heart of our drive to boost the economy through our Labour Market Strategy⁵’ (p. 76).

6. COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL SECURITY AND EQUALITIES

This portion of the Draft Budget focuses on the Scottish Government’s ambition to ‘create a fairer Scotland’ (p. 85).

With respect to housing, the Budget proposes to:

- ‘Invest to deliver more affordable homes, the majority of which will be for social rent’ (p. 92).
- Maintain the commitment ‘to deliver 50,000 affordable homes over the life of this Parliament, including 35,000 for social rent’ (p. 99).

Concerning social security, the Draft Budget aims to:

- Introduce a Social Security Bill ‘to create a fair social security system, which will include the reform of assessments for disability benefits, the extension of winter fuel payments to families with severely disabled children, a new enhanced Best Start Grant to replace current Sure Start Maternity Grants and an increased Carer’s Allowance’ (p. 11).

⁴ The Fair Work Convention supports the Scottish Government’s aim to boost economic growth and reduce inequality by promoting diversity in the workplace.

⁵ The Strategy expressly refers to the challenges faced by women in the labour market.

- Invest ‘£47 million of funding to allow local authorities to fully mitigate the effects of the ‘bedroom tax’⁶ (p. 93). The Scottish Government also makes a commitment to ‘abolish the ‘bedroom tax’ as soon as we can’ (p. 11).
- Within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme: ‘25 percent increase to the child allowance’ (p. 89).

With respect to equality, the Draft Budget outlines that a significant portion of the Equalities Budget ‘provides resource for frontline services to tackle violence against women and girls and will support activity to address discrimination and inequality across the protected characteristics. It also builds on work in areas where Scotland is already considered to have a progressive approach, for example around growing women’s representation, addressing violence against women and girls, and increasing inclusion of LGBTI communities’ (p. 96). The Draft Budget proposes to:

- Introduce a Bill to provide that public boards have an equal representation of women and men (p. 96). This commitment is consistent with the [Gender Matters Manifesto](#), which asks that gender quotas be set at 50 percent for public boards.
- ‘Maximise the impact of the [third] sector in reducing inequality’ (p. 96).
- Establish an Advisory Council on Women and Girls, which would advise on action to tackle workplace and occupational segregation (p. 96). This commitment is also consistent with the [Gender Matters Manifesto](#).
- Contribute to the implementation of the following plans and strategies (p. 96):
 - Equally Safe (prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls);
 - Disability Delivery Plan (improve the lives of deaf and disabled people);

⁶ The ‘bedroom tax’ reduces the amount of social assistance received if a home or rented home from the council or housing association has a spare bedroom.

- British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan (promote and support BSL);
and
- Race Equality Framework (promote race equality and track racism).
- ‘Support work to tackle poverty and inequality through the new European Social Fund⁷ programmes’ (p. 98).
- Support ‘public services which break cycles of disadvantage to enable everyone to live and work free from prejudice, discrimination and inequality’ (p. 99).

7. ADMINISTRATION

To achieve its strategic objectives, the Government proposes to ‘continue to invest in our people, demonstrating that we are an exemplar in employee engagement, diversity, equality and wellbeing, through the implementation of our People Strategy, public sector equality duties and the delivery of the Civil Service diversity agenda’ (p. 146).

8. CROWN OFFICE AND PROCURATOR FISCAL SERVICE

To ‘secure justice for people in Scotland’ (p. 147), the Draft Budget puts forward the following:

- ‘Prosecute hate crime, domestic abuse, stalking and sexual offending, all of which involve significant equalities issues for those who have protected characteristics across all sections of society’ (p. 147).
- ‘Continue to work with Police Scotland to implement a domestic abuse Standard Police Report’ (p. 147).

⁷ The European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund are ‘used to tackle regional disparities and support regional development through actions including developing infrastructure and telecommunications, developing human resources and supporting research and development’ (p. 176).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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ABOUT ENGENDER

Engender has a vision for a Scotland in which women and men have equal opportunities in life, equal access to resources and power, and are equally safe and secure from harm. Engender is a feminist organisation that has worked in Scotland for 20 years to advance equality between women and men.